Smuggling of Drugs

2206. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether trafficking of heroin, opium and hashish has gone down inrecent months but methequalone commonly known as mandrax has emerged as a problem drug for the enforcement agencies; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to prevent smuggling of this drug?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Since smuggling of narcotic drugs like heroin, opium, hashish and mandrax is a clandestine activity, it cannot be said definitely whether it has increased or otherwise. As regards, Methaqualone (Mandrax) effective enforcement efforts have resulted in an all time high seizure of nearly 42 tonnes of Methaqualone during 1994. also during the year, 7 clandestine manufacturing units of methaqualone were destroyed in the country.

(b) Instructions have been issued to all the enforcement agencies to maintain utmost vigil and step up enforcement efforts under the stringent provisions contained in NDPS Act. Trainning is being imparted to officers to improve their effectivness. Vehicles and communication equipments have been provided. A part of Indo-Pak border has been fenced. BSF and coast Guards, who are deployed on land and coastal borders have been vested with the powers under the Customs Act to interdict narcotics drugs on the border in addition to the Central and State Governments enforcement agencies empowered under the NDPS Act.

Conference Held by CBDT

2207. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Board of Direct Taxes recently held a two-day Conference of Chief Commissioners and Director-General of Income Tax in Delhi;

(b) if so, the subjects discussed and the conclusions reached at this Conference; and

(c) whether Government have accepted their conclusions; if so, whether these will be implemented by Government in the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASKHEHAR MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following subjects were broadly discussed during the Conference:—

(i) Review of action Plan with focus on Budget collection and recovery of tax arrears;
(ii) Modernisation/Computerisation in the Income-tax Department;
(iii) widening the tax base;
(iv) Administrative improvement in the working of the Income-tax department; and
(v) Investigation and conduct of survey & search operations.

The decisions of the Conference are as under:—

(i) Finalisation of the report on midterm & long-term plan strategy;
(ii) Constitution of a Research Cell;
(iii) Improving the working environment of the field offices;
(iv) Proper implementation of the pre-emptive purchase of property;
(v) Allotment of new Permanent Account Numbers (PAN) to the existing assessees;
(vi) Chalking out of training programme for the officers and staff of the Department; and
(vii) Statement of an assessee during the course of a search to be recorded in the presence of his councel, if the assessee so desires.

(c) Most of the recommendations have been accepted by the Government and necessary steps have been taken for their speedy implementation.

Various Tax Reforms

2208. SHRI G. PRATHAPA REDDY:
SHRI T. VENKATRAM REDDY:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering